

Message Text

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ORIGIN DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-06 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-05 /079 R

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

JCRC THILAND

USDEL FPJMT SAIGON

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E.O. 11652:NA

TAGS:PFOR,MILI, VS, VN, LA, CB

SUBJECT:

GENEVA FOR LOW CONFERENCE

1. SOME 250 PERSONS REPRESENTING FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF AMERICANS MISSING IN INDOCHINA WERE IN WASHINGTON WEEKEND JAN. 25-7 FOR MEETINGS AND PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS OF CONCERN FOR MIA'S, ORGANIZED BY NATIONAL LEAGUE OF POW/MIA FAMILIES AND BY VIVA, A PRIVATE MIA ORGANIZATION WITH HEADQUARTERS IN LOS ANGELES. GROUP MET WITH PRESIDENT'S MILITARY ASSISTANT MAJ. GEN. RICHARD LAWSON AND WITH FRANK SIEVERTS (D/PW).

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THEY CALLED ON CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES AND WERE SPOKEN TO BY

SENATORS DOLE AND KENNEDY AND SIX CONGRESSMEN. REP. BEARD (R.-TENN.) SAID HE WOULD CALL FOR INVESTIGATION OF MIA SITUATION BY SUBCOMMITTEE OF ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE OF WHICH HE IS RANKING MEMBER. SEN. DOLE (R.-KANS.) INTRODUCED RESOLUTION CALLING FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL ON MIA'S (S. CON. RES 5), FOR WHICH FAMILY MEMBERS EXPRESSED GENERAL ENTHUSIASM. (FYI, SUCH A PROPOSAL HAS BEEN UNDER STUDY, BUT NO DECISION HAS BEEN REACHED.) RESOLUTION HAS ALSO BEEN INTRODUCED BY SENATOR SPARKMAN (S. RES. 48).

2. IN ITS MORE PUBLIC ACTIVITIES, THE GROUP HELD CANDLELIGHT VIGIL AT WHITE HOUSE JAN. 26 AND DEMONSTRATED OUTSIDE STATE DEPARTMENT JAN. 27. REPRESENTATIVES OF GROUP BROUGHT BOUQUET OF RED CARNATIONS TO DEPARTMENT WHICH WERE ACCEPTED

ON SECRETARY'S BEHALF BY DEP. SEC. INGERSOLL. IN MEETING WITH DEPTOFF, GROUP MADE CLEAR THEIR DISTRESS AT LACK OF ACCOUNTING FOR THEIR MEN AND CALLED FOR SECRETARY'S PERSONAL INTERVENTION. DEPTOFF DESCRIBED CONTINUING USG EFFORTS FOR MIA'S, BY OUR EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES, JCRC, AND FPJMT, AT UN AND THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS, AND URGED FAMILIES TO TARGET THEIR EFFORTS ON COMMUNIST AUTHORITIES AS ONLY POSSIBLE SOURCE OF ACCOUNTING FOR OUR MEN.

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH ATTENDANCE AT THIS MEETING WAS SMALLER THAN IN THE PAST, THOSE PRESENT MADE UP IN MILITANCY FOR THEIR LACK OF NUMBERS. THEIR STATEMENTS TO PRESS AND TO CONGRESS, AS WELL AS SIGNS CARRIED DURING DEMONSTRATIONS, FOCUSED LESS ON HANOI AND MORE ON DEPARTMENT AND ADMINISTRATION THAN IN THE PAST. THIS MAY BE EXPLAINED IN PART BY FACT THAT THE LEAGUE OF FAMILIES, THE ORIGINAL PW/MIA FAMILY ORGANIZATION, HAS JOINED FORCES WITH THE MORE POLITICALLY ORIENTED VIVA GROUP, BUT IT ALSO REFLECTS DISTRESS OF FAMILY MEMBERS AT PASSAGE OF TIME WITH NO FURTHER ACCOUNTING.
KISSINGER

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